

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
100 MAPLE AVENUE
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2015

Present: Mr. John Samia, Chairperson; Ms. Sandra Fryc, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary; Dr. B. Dale Magee, and Mr. Jon Wensky; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

The meeting was convened at 6:15pm by Mr. Samia.

Mr. John Samia asked the School Committee if there was a motion to vote to enter into executive session for the purpose of a) discussing negotiations with the Shrewsbury Education Association, Unit A; b) for the purpose of reviewing and releasing executive session minutes from a prior meeting. On a motion made by Dr. Magee, seconded by Ms. Fryc the School Committee voted unanimously to go into executive session at 6:15 PM. Roll call vote is as follows: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes and Mr. Samia, yes. Mr. Wensky was not present.

After executive session was adjourned, the meeting was recessed, and then was re-convened at 7:03 PM by Mr. Samia. All members were present.

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

Mr. Samia shared that they attended to the 25th Annual Shrewsbury Media Connections (SMC) Producer Awards and he wanted to recognize Mr. Bill Nay who is retiring after 23 years of service as Director at SMC.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer reported that he, Ms. Banios, Assistant Superintendent and Mr. Bazydlo, SHS Principal had the opportunity earlier in the day to attend an educational conference at Gillette stadium. This conference, which is sponsored by the Mass Computer Using Educators (MASSCUE) and Massachusetts Superintendent's Association, featured keynote speakers and numerous sessions on technology related topics. He explained the highlight was seeing presentations from Shrewsbury students and educators. Educational Television Director, Ms. Maggie Korab and four students presented innovative work they are doing during the morning session; Shawna Powers, Director of Instructional Technology and Media Services, Tara Gauthier, Instructional Technology teacher at SHS, and four students from her newly created Student Innovation Team (SIT) class gave a presentation on educational technology and the creation of the SIT program at a session in the afternoon. These groups were selected after applying last spring to present their exceptional work. Dr. Sawyer also shared that Ms. Carol Virzi, fifth grade teacher at Sherwood Middle School and some of her former students would be presenting previously created

technology projects the next day. Feedback from attendees was very positive and he congratulated the students for their work.

Next he shared that he would be sending out a formal request for participants from the community for a committee to review the school calendar and school start times. He explained that the School Committee asked him to convene this group to review and develop a recommendation regarding the potential for adjustments to the school calendar and school start times, which would be presented to the Committee.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Student Recognition: Superintendent's Awards

Dr. Sawyer selected SHS seniors Yutong Liu and Allison Ross as the recipients of the Superintendent's Awards on behalf of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. Ms. Liu and Ms. Ross currently hold the two highest GPA's in the senior class at SHS. Dr. Sawyer provided highlights of each student's achievements and Ms. Liu and Ms. Ross made statements about being honored to receive the awards. Dr. Sawyer said that he and Mr. Bazydlo, SHS Principal, would attend the annual Worcester County School Superintendents Award luncheon in January with Ms. Liu and Ms. Ross.

B. PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size: Report

Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins presented a report to Committee members on the district's enrollment and class size data for the current school year effective October 1, 2015. He said this report information is also shared with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Dr. Sawyer shared key points and data and said the current student enrollment, noting a surprising rise at the middle level with 2001 students, a higher number than projected. He explained that they are keeping a close eye on the number of students in 8th grade moving to the high school in order to determine whether or not any budget changes will be required. He also noted the increase in grade six, where in the past, reduced numbers were appearing due to students transferring to the Advanced Math and Science Academy (AMSA). This rise in numbers is due in part to the number of students leaving to attend AMSA decreasing. Next Dr. Sawyer reviewed kindergarten figures, which show 10 more students than last year. He then talked about the percent increase from kindergarten to grade 1 explaining that the enrollment numbers often increase due to the amount of full-day kindergarten spots available. When families are unable to enroll in full day kindergarten they typically choose private kindergarten but then return to SPS for first grade thereby increasing the overall enrollment.

Mr. Collins highlighted the overall class sizes in relationship to School Committee guidelines. He discussed overall figures at each grade level based on a comparison of five-year figures. Figures indicate consistency throughout the schools including out-of-district placement except for a notable change at Oak Middle School, which has shown a steady increase. Vocational school enrollment showed a slight dip in numbers. Mr. Collins then reviewed demographic data on ethnicity using comparative information available from the Department of Education from the time period of 1993 to present. The numbers reflect significant changes in the Asian and Hispanic populations.

Committee members asked a few questions regarding whether families are choosing charter schools as an alternative for full day kindergarten, the impact if state funding for full day kindergarten is not an option, and when data will be available to better predict the numbers for students moving on to ninth grade. Dr. Sawyer indicated that they are waiting for the release of reports on charter schools to determine if families are choosing that as an option. He stated that administration is considering options for maximizing full day kindergarten. Finally, in regard to students choosing other schools for 9th grade, it is too early to have a clear indication of choices regarding private or vocational options for the next school year.

C. SHS Enrollment & Class Size: Report

Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Principal at SHS and Mr. Greg Nevader, Assistant Principal at SHS, presented an overview of SHS class size by department. Mr. Bazydlo and Mr. Nevader shared highlights from the report including that there are currently 1,668 students enrolled at SHS, which is a decrease of 17 students from the 2014-15 school year. Mr. Nevader also discussed enrollment vs. FTE's, and reductions in academic student-teacher ratio, over enrollment figures, average class size by department, reductions in teachers' caseloads. Mr. Bazydlo then reviewed examples of the continued impact additional resources are having.

The Committee asked various clarifying questions regarding the expected impact of the incoming 8th grade class that has the largest number in many years, the effects of reduced caseloads in regards to teachers being involved again in professional book groups and/or study groups, and an overall indication of the impact on teachers' caseloads with the introduction of the 1:1 technology program and overall occupancy of the high school.

Mr. Bazydlo indicated they will review the number of incoming 8th grade students in early spring and consider ways in which to keep class sizes low. He also indicated that at least four teacher study groups have been reestablished, and there is a plan to survey students and staff to get metrics on the 1:1 technology impact on teachers' caseloads. He also mentioned that having a unified platform through the use of the learning management system, Schoology, has streamlined their work. Mr. Nevader indicated the high school room occupancy level is at 97% and they have found solutions to maintain efficiency.

Committee members and Dr. Sawyer thanked Mr. Bazydlo and Mr. Nevader for their report.

V. Curriculum

None

VI. Policy

None

VII. Finance and Operations

A. Potential Beal Early Childhood Center Building

Mr. Collins gave an update regarding the Statement of Interest (SOI) application that was submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Association (MSBA) in January 2015. He started with an overview of the process and the criteria that the MSBA uses to determine eligibility. He also explained the funding process, how many districts have submitted applications and how many projects the MSBA might be likely to undertake. He then gave further explanation of the process if the Beal project is invited into the Eligibility Period and then what is required after that including the drafting of maintenance documents and certification of enrollment projection. He indicated that the MSBA's decision on Beal would be issued in January 2016.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

A. Shrewsbury Education Association Contractual

Stipends: Vote

Ms. Malone explained that recently a conclusion had been reached regarding a stipend negotiation with the Shrewsbury Education Association (SEA). She said a group of eight committee members worked together for over a year to review all the stipends for the purpose of updating since this process has not been done for a number of years. She noted that the key points were: 1) An increase of \$10 from \$265 to \$275 for clubs at the high school level; 2) The addition of payment for 10 clubs that have been running at the high school for at least two years without pay - stipends will be \$275; 3) Matching amounts paid for “like” roles; 4) Equity within the performing arts program, which is significantly self-funded by ticket sales; 5) Delisting positions in the contract that are defunct. Mr. Samia asked a clarifying question about how the positions are listed in the report in regards to future funding.

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by, Ms. Fryc, the School Committee voted 4-0 to ratify the stipend agreement between the SEA with Mr. Wensky recusing himself from the vote due to a conflict of interest.

B. Assabet Valley Collaborative: Quarterly Report

In accordance with the state regulations of providing quarterly updates, Dr. Sawyer enclosed information regarding the purpose of the Collaborative, and the various services provided, noting in particular the transitional Evolution program offered at the Shrewsbury High School.

X. Approval of Minutes: Vote

Mr. Samia requested a motion to approve the amended minutes of the School Committee meeting on September 23, 2015. On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the amended minutes of the School Committee meeting on September 23, 2015.

XI. Executive Session

Executive session was held prior to the general meeting – see above.

XII. Information Enclosures

None

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Samia, yes.

Respectfully submitted
Kimberlee Cantin, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size Report and Slide Presentation
- 2) SHS enrollment and Class Size Report and Slide Presentation
- 3) Potential Beal Early Childhood Center Building Report and Slide Presentation
- 4) Shrewsbury Education Association Contractual Stipends Memo
- 5) Assabet Valley Collaborative Quarterly Brochure